percentage points above the floor rate fixed by Reserve Bank of India.

To assist small scale industries in getting payment without much delay, Reserve Bank of India has advised banks that while sanctioning or renewing the limits to medium/large industrial borrowers, banks should fix, within the overall credit limits, separate sub-limits for acceptance/ letter of credit facilities which should be utilised only for purchases from small scale units. In November, 1997, banks have been instructed to advise their corporate borrowers that they should, with effect from January 1, 1998, finance their domestic credit purchases from SSI units as also from SSI and others taken together, at least to the extent of 25 per cent by way of acceptance of bills drawn on them by their suppliers.

Government's Control over Dishonest Builders

*67. SHRI GOVINDRAM MIRI: Will the Minister of URBAN AFFAIRS & EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any control over dishonest builders who have been looting simple Delhites in many ways;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the justification of such stance?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) to (c) The cases against the dis-honest builders can presently be filed under Consumer Protection Act, 1986 and also under the Indian Penal Code. However, the Government is considering to frame a specific legislation for regulating the activities of promoters, builders and property agents in Delhi to address these problems. The proposed legislation would provide for registration of builders, promoters and estate agents, punitive measures for non-compliance of terms and conditions entered into between the promoters and the prospective buyers and also for making untrue statement in the prospectus/ advertisement. It would also provide for maintenance of separate accounts for each project which would be subject to audit to be prescribed by the Government, refund of advance amount with interest in case the builder fails to give possession of the flat/plot etc. as per the agreement, maintenance of essential services etc. No builder would be able to collect any advance payment before entering into registered agreement of sale with the prospective buyers. The project details including infrastructure facilities and all clearances under the laws/bye-laws/regulations will have to be disclosed in advance.

Urban Water Supply Schemes of Maharashtra

*68. PROF. RAM KAPSE:
SHRIMATI MALTI SHARMA:

Will the Minister of URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether 21 Urban Water Supply Schemes of Maharashtra are pending with Government for approval;

(b) if so, the reasons for the pendency; and

(c) by when these schemes will be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) Under the Accelerated Urban Water Supply Programme (AUWSP) applicable to towns having population of less than 20,000 (as per 1991 Census), the Maharashtra Government has sent a total number of 29 schemes, out of which 10 schemes at an estimated cost of Rs. 1371.10 lakhs have already been approved.

Apart from these, the Maharashtra Government has sought technical clearance of the Central Public Health & Environmental Engineering Organisation (CPHEEO) in this Ministry for 22 schemes for the purpose of seeking loan assistance from Life Insurance Corporation (LIC).

(b) Under the AUSWP, it has not been possible to approve 19 schemes due to lack of budgetary resources.

Out of the 22 schemes received for technical clearance, 12 schemes have been received on 14.05.1998 only. Remaining 10 schemes were technically examined and technical comments had been communicated to the State Government. Replies of the State Government

in respect of seven of these schemes have been received recently on 14.5.98. Replies in respect of three schemes have not yet been received from the State Government.

(c) Approval of the schemes under the AUWSP would depend upon the availability of funds for the same, under the Central plan, for the Ministry of Urban Affairs & Employment.

Technical clearance of other 22 schemes received from the Maharashtra Government would depend upon the techno-economic feasibility of these schemes.

बासमती चावल को पेटेन्ट करवाना

*69. **श्री जनार्दन यादव:**
श्रीमती वीणा वर्मा:

क्या वाणिज्य मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि भारत पूरे विश्व में बासमती चावल का सबसे बड़ा और एकमात्र उत्पादक है;

(ख) क्या यह भी सच है कि भारतीय बासमती को अमरीकी बासमती के नाम से पेटेन्ट कराया गया है;

(ग) क्या सरकार अमरीका में पेटेन्ट कराये गये बासमती चावल के पेटेन्ट को रद्द करवाने के संबंध में कार्यवाही करने पर विचार कर रही है; और

(घ) यदि हां, तो कब तक और यदि नहीं, तो उसके क्या कारण हैं?

वाणिज्य मंत्री (श्री राम कृष्ण हेगड़े): (क) बासमती चावल केवल भारत और पाकिस्तान में उगाया जाता है।

(ख) से (घ) पेटेंट्स और ट्रेडमार्क्स आयुक्त, संयुक्त राज्य अमरीका द्वारा राइस टैक, इंक. एल्विन टैक्सास को 2.9.1997 को "बासमती लाइन्स एण्ड ग्रेन्स" शीर्षक के अन्तर्गत पैटेन्ट प्रदान किया गया था। मैसर्स राइस टेक, इक. को प्रदत्त पेटेन्ट को चुनौती देने के लिए औद्योगिक विकास विभाग, उद्योग मंत्रालय के अन्तर्गत एक अंतर-मंत्रालयी समिति की स्थापना की गई है। पेटेंट्स और ट्रेडमार्क्स आयुक्त, संयुक्त राज्य अमरीका द्वारा प्रदत्त पेटेन्ट के अधिनिर्णय को चुनौती देने के लिए मूल सामग्री और वैज्ञानिक आंकड़े भी संकलित किए जा रहे हैं।

संबंधित सरकारों द्वारा अपने-अपने पेटेन्ट कानूनों के अंतर्गत पैटेन्ट प्रदान किए जाते हैं। जब भी ऐसी सूचना मिलती है कि भारत के वाणिज्यिक हित के किन्हीं उत्पादों के लिए पैटेन्ट लिया जा रहा है और जो कि हमारे विचार से पेटेन्ट कराने के मानदण्ड को पूरा नहीं करता है, तब यह जायजा लेने के लिए कदम उठाए जाते हैं कि पेटेन्ट प्रदान करने को चुनौती दी जा सकती है या नहीं। जब पर्याप्त सामग्री/इकट्ठी हो जाती है, तब पुन: जांच के लिए और उस देश में पैटेन्ट को अंतिम रुप से समाप्त करने हेतु याचिका दायर करने के लिए कदम उठाए जाते हैं।

Reduction in investment limit of SSIs

*70. SHRI JALALUDIN ANSARI:
SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to reduce the maximum investment limit from the present Rs. three crore for the SSI units to Rs. one crore and continue the reservation of item for manufacture in the small scale sector; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) and (b) The Prime Minister announced at the Laghu Udyog Bharti function held on 29-4-1998 that the investment limit for a SSI unit would be reduced from Rs. 3 crores to Rs. 1 crores. Necessary follow up action on PM's announcement is being taken.

As regards reservation of items for manufacture in the small scale sector, Government's policy is to continue with the policy of reservation. However, the list/number of items so reserved may be reviewed from time to time in the overall interest of the economy.

Promotion of Indo-Myanmar and Indo-Bangladesh Trading

*71. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the steps Government have taken to promote the Indo-Myanmar and Indo-Bangladesh trading possibilities and transit routes in relation to the North-East and neighbouring countries and of the transport re-connections or new facilities that might be useful and mutually advantageous to both sides; and

(b) these steps Government have taken to implement the suggestions made in high level S.P. Shukla Commission report to the Prime Minister on March 7, 1997 as regards trade and transit in relation to the North-East?